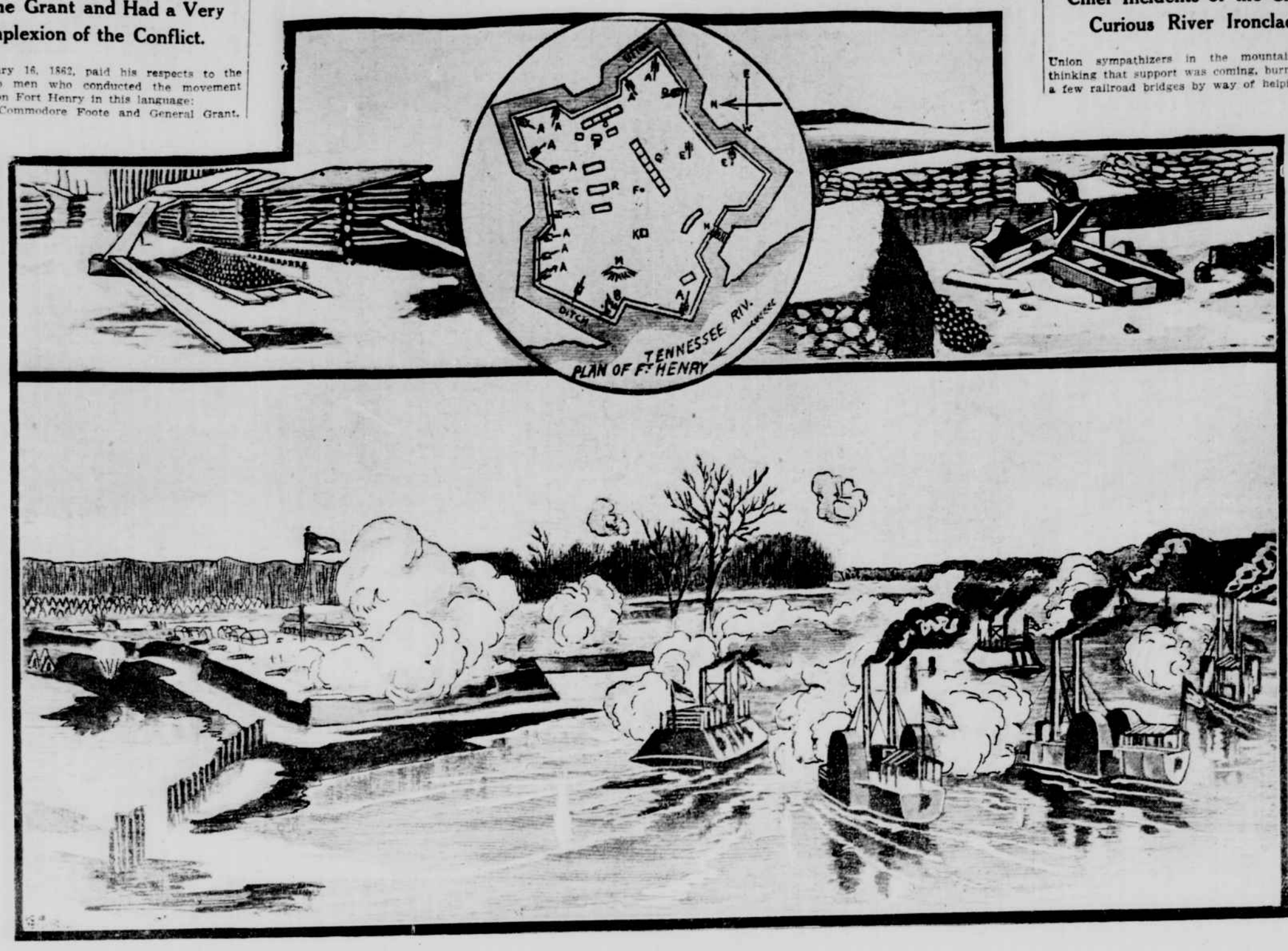
Capture of Fort Henry, Five Decades Ago, Introduced One U. S. Grant

Herein Is Related How a Slide Down Hill on Horseback Preserved for the North This Same Grant and Had a Very Great Effect Upon the Complexion of the Conflict.

SECESSION ORDNANCE STORES INSIDE THE FORT.

A BURST 24-POUNDER INSIDE THE FORT.



THE ATTACK ON FORT HENRY

Reproduced from a contemporary sketch in "Harper's Weekly," by courtesy of the publishers.

In This, the Third of The Tribune's Series Dealing with the Chief Incidents of the Civil War, the Attack of Eads's Curious River Ironclads on the Fort Is Narrated.

THE THIRD battle anniversary of the Civil War of marked interest is that of the attack on Fort Henry, on the Tennessee River, on February 6, 1862. This battle served to introduce to the nation a man who was destined to become the greatest Union warrior of the conflict. The capture of this fortification by the Union arms was followed by the first penetration of the Northern line of offence and defence of the Confederacy. The fleet of curious looking river ironclads, built for the purpose of carrying the war into the heart of the South by way of the Mississippi, was baptized in the artillery duel which preceded the surrender. The workmanlike manner in which the affair was conducted was like a breath of fresh air after the many efforts of President Lincoln to get the various generals started on a definite offensive campaign.

The story of Fort Henry and the succeeding campaign in the Mississippi Valley begins about the time that the group of prominent citizens of Cincinnati was meeting to promote the appointment of ex-Captain George B. McClellan to an important command in the Union army. On April 23, two days after that momentous incident, another of less conspicuous character but of greater moment occurred in Illinois. On that day a company of volunteers from Galena, in Northwestern Illinois, reached Springfield in temporary command of ex-Captain Grant. Little known to those in charge of military details at the Illinois capital, this man showed such knowledge of military tactics that he was invited to assist in getting the troops in readiness for service.

The task completed, Grant decided to apply for a command. No leading citizens met to push his claims. His application went by mail, and was for designation as a colonel, a rank for which he thought his experience fitted him. His letter was pigeon-holed among many papers and was forgotten. It was only when he was asked by Governor Yates of Illinois to take command of a recalcitrant regiment of volunteers, upon the management of which the "political colonels" were afraid to risk their reputations, that he received an appointment. By daily persistence in marching his men across country instead of moving them by rail he won their obedience and started on his fighting career.

His method of doing things began to attract attention. He wasted no space in his dispatches. They were always clear. His reports were invariably correct and prompt in their appearance. His suggestions were always to the point and practical. Whenever he was ordered to do anything, it was done. Although supplies might be short or munitions of war insufficient, he always found a way to accomplish the work set before him, and this without the delays and the utterance of excuses and complaints which filled the correspondence of so many other military men at the beginning of the war. As a result his tasks constantly became more important, and from guarding a station on the North Missouri Railroad, in the course of a few months he rose to the command of the great military depot and rendezvous at Cairo, Ill.

A Tribune correspondent, describing the capture of Fort Henry, in the issue of February 16, 1862, paid his respects to the two men who conducted the movement upon Fort Henry in this language:

"Commodore Foote and General Grant, whether great commanders or not, are officers of peculiar reticence. They believe in the German proverb that 'Speech is silvern, but silence is golden.' Their manner of inaugurating the expedition affords gratifying contrast to the magnificent volubility which has emasculated so many of our enterprises. Up to last Sunday the wiseacres reported 'All quiet along the lines,' and predicted that there would be no movement in this department for the next thirty days. But suddenly it became evident that something was going on which meant business, and the next day the expedition started."

Up to the opening of 1862 the war made little progress. The generals were paying more attention to routine details than to great plans for great campaigns. The armies all along the border line were growing larger, but drilling, with an occasional reconnoitring expedition, seemed to be their chief business. The commanding officers paid little attention to Lincoln's hints and suggestions as to moves, each following his own sweet will, and cooperating with no one else. McClellan was drilling and drilling and drilling his Army of the Potomac. Halleck had superseded Fremont in Missouri, and Kentucky was trying to retain a neutral position, which each side pretended to respect. The mountaineers in Eastern Tennessee and the neighboring states were anxious to be included in the Union. Lincoln felt that a campaign which would establish a connection with these mountaineers would go a long way toward breaking up the Confederacy, as it would stimulate Union sympathy in the heart of the South, would tap an additional supply of men and would make it possible to cut the great rail artery between Virginia and the Southern states bordering on the Gulf and the Mississippi. The Union sympathizers in the mountains, thinking that support was coming, burned a few railroad bridges by way of helping the cause along, but the generals were not so enthusiastic as President Lincoln was about this method of breaking the backbone of the Confederacy, and they did not move.

The neutrality of Kentucky, with its rival governments, was broken by the Confederates, General Leonidas Polk taking possession of the heights overlooking the Mississippi at Columbus, Ky. Grant was not behindhand, and equalized the situation by taking possession of Paducah, at the mouth of the Tennessee River, and Smithland, at the mouth of the Cumberland. The rival forces took their stand on Kentucky soil, the Confederates, under Buckner, advancing to Bowling Green and Brigadier General Zollicoffer, with another force, taking position northwest of the Cumberland Gap, the gateway into Eastern Tennessee, whose possession Lincoln had strongly hinted that the Union forces should gain. General Buell was in command of the Union troops in front of Buckner and Zollicoffer. In the rear of the advanced Confederate line was Fort Henry on the Tennessee River, and Fort Donelson, only twelve miles distant across country, on a bend of the Cumberland River. The Confederates, also, had established a line of fortifications along the Mississippi, from Columbus to the mouth, the strongest being at Vicksburg, which was made the citadel of the river because of its central position. From whichever direction the Union forces might come, it was thought they could be stayed at Vicksburg and control of the river retained in that way.

For the purpose of warfare on the Mississippi and its tributaries it was decided by the administration to construct a number of ironclad river gunboats. James B. Eads, the famous engineer, whose name is connected with the great bridge across the river at St. Louis and the jetties at the mouth of the "Father of Waters," was invited to go to Washington early in 1861 to discuss the subject. He contracted to build seven ironclad gunboats of his own design, and performed the remarkable feat of constructing them within one hundred days. In fact, a larger one, the Benton, in addition, was delivered at Cairo within this period. The vessels were accepted on January 15, 1862, and put into commission.

The greatness of Eads's feat is more clearly realized when it is recalled that the total tonnage of the flotilla was 5,000, that the speed which the vessels were to make was nine knots, the engine being built also within the period of one hundred days and that the craft carried more than a hundred big guns. Notwithstanding all the efforts which Eads put forth, the government was not equally prompt with its payment, and all the great battles on the upper Mississippi in which they participated with such marked success were fought before the vessels had been paid for and while they were still the property of Mr. Eads.

The vessels were really great rectangular iron covered boxes, or casemates on rafts propelled by stern paddle wheels incased within these big boxes. They were 175 feet long, 51½ feet wide and carried thirteen big guns each. The casemates had slanting sides, pierced for guns to fire either forward or backward or in broadsides. The vessels, however, were intended to fight bow on, and the front end of the boxes, therefore, had the greater thickness of oak and iron. The Benton was protected by 3½ inches of iron. The vessels were placed in command of Captain Foot, a man of deep religious instincts and great force of character, and were manned by nondescript crews, picked up wherever they could be gathered together. The men proved to be of the right stuff.

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The Farmhand's Specialty Is Flirting with the Grim Reaper, It Seems

Not the Machine That Cuts Grain, but the Old Nemesis That Cuts Down the Human Race.

"CHEEP, cheep!" said the little bird.

"Gurgle, gurgle!" added the brook, as it purled its way through the peaceful green meadow.

All was quiet and contentment. Over on the sunny slope of a nearby field a happy farmhand was breaking the fragrant glebe with the aid of a chilled plough and a couple of kindly appearing mules. From the village beyond the grove came the mellow chimes of the switch engine bell. An air of plenty and security enfolded the landscape. The cemetery, whose stones gleamed like teeth on a distant hillside, seemed to have no other significance than to add to the restfulness of the picture.

Meanwhile the ploughman was wrestling with the handles of the chilled plough. He came to the end of a furrow and prepared to return.

"Gee, there, you Buck—gee, I say!"

But see! The line has become entangled with the Buck mule's tail. The happy ploughman goes around and starts to untangle it, when suddenly—as old Nick Carter would say—there is a thud.

The mule raises a deft hind foot and plants the same heavily on a part of the ploughman's shirt near a delicate portion of his organism. The ploughman sails jauntily over into a fence corner and the scene of smiling pease is wiped out of his memory by a display of shooting stars, followed by complete oblivion. He is out.

In the course of time they ring the dinner bell at the house and when he doesn't show up for his feed the farmer knows at once that something important must have happened to keep him away. Ultimately they find him all piled up in the same fence corner. He is still out.

So they lug him up to the house and send the son and heir for the nearest doctor. Meanwhile the bird resumes its happy roundelay and the brook gurgles right along as if it had a date somewhere and was late, for this is only one of the everyday occurrence that a farmhand has to take chances on. The fact is that he is engaged in one of the most dangerous of all trades. We who live here among the tall buildings, next door to a million different sorts of urban perils, think that the gentle tiller of the soil never has to worry about life and accident insurance. That is all we know about it.

The average farmhand takes more risks than the man who is an habitual smoker and who works in a powder mill. This has been proved in Germany, as shown by an exhibit of the National Association of Manufacturers, which held its sixteenth annual meeting in this city last week. The methodical Germans have a fondness for statistics, and their figures on industrial accidents and deaths were the most complete of any in the exhibit.

There were charts from Canada bearing out the assertion that the gentle farm life is more dangerous than warfare. Some of the cards exhibited were of the circular sort, divided into segments of various colors to show up the different industries as killers and maimers of their workmen. In every case the farming industry was allotted the largest segment.

Here is one of the charts showing the comparative number of accidents in Germany during the year 1908, with the percentage of each industry in the total:

Farming, 42 1-3 per cent.
Steel industries, 10½ per cent.
Mining, 8¼ per cent.
Building trades, 7½ per cent.
Railways, 4 per cent.
Woodworking industries, 3½ per cent.
Warehouses, 2 per cent.
Quarries, 2 per cent.
Textile industries, 2 per cent.
Excavating, 1¾ per cent.
Teaming, 1½ per cent.
All others, 13½ per cent.

From that you will see that a man who handles the nitro sticks for a quarry or the daredevil ironworker who likes to play around on a narrow beam forty stories above the ground aren't in it for sheer bravery with the youth who sticks at home and hoes out the corn.

Of the fatal accidents in Germany during this same year 1908, the farm was credited with 30½ per cent of the total. The mines came a poor second with 19 per cent. Our neighbor, Canada, has something to add along the same lines. During 1909 the farms of the Dominion were responsible for 20 per cent of all fatal accidents. Mining was a second there, also, with a credit of 12 per cent. Canada has another interesting little item in regard to the increase of accidents.

Their records show that from the year 1904 until 1909 the mining accidents decreased 50 per cent, while accidents on the farm increased 87 per cent. Why, you could look over that exhibit of the manufacturers and get the idea that a man begins flirting with the Grim Reaper the minute he picks up a hay rake and starts for the smiling fields.

There are no records for the United States, but in all probability the farming fatalities and accidents are even greater in proportion here on account of the fact that the American farmer makes more use of machinery than the farmer of any other country. Another little card that shows how safe farming is not tells how the insurance companies in this country regard risks on a man who tills the soil.

The farmer is classed by the accident insurance companies as a special and hazardous risk. On an average he pays a yearly premium of $12.50 to $15. The average machinist pays from $10 to $12.50, and the textile worker from $7.50 to $10. The casualty companies charge the farmer an average of $13.50 a year. The mill operative pays only $8, the machinist $10.50 and the carpenter $11.

It is an easy matter to explain, after all. Walter Drew, an attorney, who has made a study of the proposition, says:

"One of the things that make work so dangerous for the farmhand is the fact that he has to do so many different kinds of work, all of which have an element of danger. The farmhand has to handle and drive horses. He has to work with dynamite. He is a carpenter, a woodcutter and a painter. He is constantly busy with all sorts of cutting and grinding machinery, with cogs and knives, that may cripple him in an unguarded moment. Of all the trades there is scarcely a danger that doesn't apply to farm work. He runs the combined risk of all the trades and yet he is not especially skilled in any one thing. That increases the chances against him."

In Germany they have learned to lessen the danger of farm work by all kinds of little devices. If the Teuton farmer has a horse that likes to bite the hand that feeds him—(get that pun?—farmhand, of course)—the animal is adorned with a muzzle such as the local dogs affect during the long, hot days of hydrophobia time. A cow that is too frisky with her horns is liable to have them removed without gas. The mule with a fondness for kicking is forced to wear a skirtless hobble, consisting of a strong necklace to which are tied two ropes, one running from each hind ankle. This prevents any backhand work on the part of the rear feet.

Nor is it pure philanthropy that makes the German farmer decorate his livestock with safety devices and guard the cogs of his machinery. Referring again to the bloody statistics of the German farm, we find that in 1901 forty-eight associations, made up of agricultural employes, had to pay compensations for 56,09 accidents to farmhands. This was 514 more than the sixty-five industrial employers' associations paid for during the same period. The cost of damage suits is enough in itself to make the farmer over there careful about the welfare of the man he has working for him.

Over here in the land of liberty all is different. The farmhand can feed all the fingers he has to the corn sheller, and the farmer will kick about the stock food being spoiled. In the few states that have compensation and prevention laws they didn't remember to include teh useful farmhand. Farming is still considered safe, and it may have been merely an oversight. Then, again, farmhands are unorganized, and they don't go out after these things if they ever happen to notice them.

It certainly is a fact that farming is growing more and more perilous. In these days the man who goes at it right has a

More Accidents Happen to Farmers Than to Any Other Class, if German Statistics Are Correct.

house and barnyard full of machinery. He has his own gasolene engine that pumps his water and manufactures electricity for his house and stables. If the hired man loses a couple of hands trying to start the thing when it is first set up, that is the hired man's lookout. True, but they were also the hired man's hands.

Added to the other newer sources of danger is the motor car. It is a poor farmer who hasn't a barn with a car in it these days. That adds the temptation for the farmer's son to go joy riding on his way home from the strawberry festival, with the inevitable result of runaway horses, wrecked machines and expensive funerals.

One wouldn't consider an ordinary scythe a very dangerous thing to work with. Yet these same methodical Germans got out their adding machines one year and counted 4,483 accidents that scythe blades were the fathers of.

The advent of dynamite into the art of intensive farm cultivation hasn't added anything to the security of the farmer's life and limb. They use it for about everything now except milking the cows and weaning the calves. Any of these fine mornings the daredevil farmhand may start out to break ground or dig stumps with his dinner pail in one hand and a bundle of dynamite sticks swinging carelessly in the other. He may return home a little later by the air route and land with his anatomy all jumbled up.

The Pennsylvania Railroad recently issued a little book telling all about explosive farming. After one has looked through the treatise one is moved to observe that "sweet are the uses of dynamite." The book tells you all the things that dynamite can be used for on the old farm, but assumes no obligation over fuses

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SOME OF THE REASONS WHY FARM LIFE IS WORSE THAN WAR AND A FEW SUGGESTED REMEDIES.